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UNCLAS PORT AU PRINCE 002720

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR WHA/EPSC

WHA/CAR

EB/ESC/IEC

INR/IAA/MAC

S/CRS

TREASURY FOR MAUREEN WAFER

USDOC FOR 4322/ITA/MAN/WH/OLAC (SMITH, S.)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ENRG](#) [EFIN](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: HAITI: IGOH STILL RESISTANT TO OIL DEAL WITH
VENEZUELA DEAL DESPITE PRESSURE

REF: PORT AU PRINCE 02596

1. (SBU) Post continues to see scattered press reports indicating that Haiti is considering signing an agreement with the Government of Venezuela to obtain petroleum at a discount rate via PetroCaribe. Econ Counselor spoke to an official with the Ministry of Finance, who spoke directly to Finance Minister Henri Bazin. Bazin indicated that Haiti was far from any agreement with Venezuela, and that no one in any position of authority from the Interim Government of Haiti (IGOH) had even sat down to discuss the matter with the government of Venezuela. Bazin added that instead discussions were ongoing with the Government of Mexico to obtain a special deal from them on petroleum imports.

2. (SBU) Despite the Finance Minister,s continued reassurances, the pressure is still on the IGOH to strike a deal with Venezuela. In addition to the press reports, organizations that have organized demonstrations in the past against high prices in Haiti have publicly called on the IGOH to accept Venezuela,s offer to negotiate on a concessional deal.

3. (SBU) COMMENT: Post will continue to monitor movement, if any, on this issue. The high price of oil has a strong impact on inflation in Haiti and the possibility of a special deal on petroleum imports is a tempting one, if not for the IGOH, then for the next government scheduled to take over in February 2006. END COMMENT.
CARNEY

=====CABLE ENDS=====